



## When Newark Was Younger

## Country Fairs

EACH Spring the New Jersey Council, public relations agency of the Department of Conservation and Economic Development, distributes the New Jersey State Date Book. Those who have learned that this booklet may have had for the asking, have been interested to find out that there are still plenty of county fairs in New Jersey, as well as the State Fair in Trenton.

Newarkers who have grown up since the turn of the century may not recall that for many years we had a famous fair just outside this city. The Waverly Fair was held for the last time on the ground now occupied by Weequahic Park 50 years ago, in September, 1899. That year the Essex County Park Commission bought the land.

The Waverly Fairs were held there annually over a period of more than 30 years, beginning in the Fall of 1867.

Waverly is not often heard of in Newark nowadays, except as the name of a telephone exchange, and a freight station of the Pennsylvania Railroad. We are more apt to speak of the Weequahic section, or even the old Lyons Farms neighborhood. The name "Waverly" was given to the section by Mary Mapes Dodge, well known to us as the author of "Hans Brinker, or the Silver Skates," and editor for many years of St. Nicholas Magazine. She was a lover of Scott's Waverley Novels, and others took up from her the name she adopted for the locality where she lived. Over the years the second "e" in Waverley has

been dropped. When Mrs. Dodge lived there the section was part of Clinton Township, not coming into Newark until 1900.

THOUGH Mrs. Dodge's father, Professor James J. Mapes, died in January, 1866, the year before the Waverly Fairs began, he had much to do with their development. Professor Mapes was a chemist, an inventor, and one of the founders of the National Agricultural Society. His chemistry led him to a study of soil fertility. To convince other agriculturists of the practical value of his theories he acquired in 1847 a badly run down farm of 30 acres along the upper road from Newark to Elizabeth.

Scientific plowing, and experiments in fruit culture

brought the farm to a high degree of productivity. In 1857 Professor Mapes began opening his farm to visitors every Saturday, exhibiting all sorts of new and improved farm tools, some of them his own inventions. His magazine, "Working Farmer," reported the tremendous productivity of his land, augmented, by 1859, to 121 acres.

With Professor Mapes was closely associated Patrick T. Quinn, a Newarker whose life is a veritable Horatio Alger story. Born in Langford, Ireland, in 1838, he came to America with his parents at the age of 10 and became errand boy for Professor Mapes. Laboring on the farm all day, his industry and intelligence impressed Mapes, who began to teach him in the evenings. At 16 he was sent to the Rev.

Mr. Pingry's boarding school in Roseville. At 18 he became Professor Mapes' farm superintendent, later associate editor of "Working Farmer," and instructor in a course on scientific and practical agriculture established on the farm. For 14 years he was secretary of the State Agricultural Society, the organization which developed the fair grounds at Waverly, and conducted the annual fairs. Newarkers may remember Mr. Quinn best as secretary of the Board of Trade, and comptroller of the city for several years. After Professor Mapes' death he became the owner of the Mapes farm.

NEWARK had known agricultural fairs before the grounds at Waverly were developed. The year after the New Jersey State Agricultural Society was organized in Camden, in August, 1854, the society sponsored a public competitive trial of mowing machines on the farm of Obadiah Meeker on the Elizabethtown road near Newark. Farmers gathered from all over the state to witness the trials and see the prizes awarded. The first real agricultural fair was held in Camden in the Fall of 1855 and in 1856 Newark offered \$3,000 to attract the fair here.

This 1856 fair was attended by 50,000 people. It was held on 20 acres of land loaned by Isaac Crane on the old Bloomfield road east of Ridge street. A cattle ring, a grand stand for 5,000 persons, a half-mile track (for trotting horses) and seven canvas tents were made ready for the four-day exhibition. The society passed a resolution forbidding "the sale of ardent spirits on the ground occupied by the Fair." Premiums worth over \$4,000 attracted

JULY 31, 1949



Leslie's caption for this illustration read: "During the fair there was a very spirited trial of steeds which was a source of much entertainment. The ladies

took an active part and they were beautiful to behold in their gay and lively costumes." The four-day show of the State Agricultural Society drew 50,000 people.



Argonauts of '49 included many Newarkers who sought share of gold discovered by Jerseyman in country won by Princetonian

BY MIRIAM STUDLEY

Principal New Jersey History Librarian, Newark Public Library



Sutter's Mill from an illustration in "The Annals of San Francisco," a book published in 1854. Here Jim Marshall, descendant of John Mart, New Jersey signer of the Declaration of Independence, discovered gold almost at the same time that Commodore Richard Stockton, a native of Princeton, helped win California for the United States.



James W. Marshall



Commodore Stockton

from newspapers throughout the country emphasized the difficulties of the journey and the risks, declaring that any one who was well estab-

lished in the East would be foolish to venture only those who had nothing to lose should go.

lynch law, high prices, great good fortune and great sickness and misery. The ship Apollo which sailed in mid-January with nine Newarkers on board, was deserted by all its crew in San Francisco like hundreds of other ships. It became a floating hotel in San Francisco harbor.

Early in April news began to come back from the Newarkers on route. General Darcy's party, with 11 wagons and 11 tents, were among the 1,500 persons camped around Independence, Mo. They had reached there the last of March after a hazardous journey by boat from St.

Louis in which several deck passengers died of cholera and Alderman Pennington's cabin was completely wrecked by a snag which broke through the hull. One of the

Newark party was killed in a two-day snow storm on April 14, saying "I am glad B. is content to stay at home. He's a lucky fellow in that contentment. I was not content and so am going to California."

Another Newarker wrote from the west coast of Mexico that he had ridden two horses to death and sold a third for \$2 after a 28-day journey overland, and had also had his pistols stolen. "That is all the bad luck I have had, and now am bound to have some of the good fortune. So, farewell, and expect to see me back with

my pocket full of gold in about a year."

FEW Newarkers were so cheerful. Rev. T. D. Hunt, Newark clergyman who went as a missionary to the wicked city of San Francisco, gave up all thought of building a home for his family, lumber was so costly. A two-room board shanty, with inside walls of muslin, cost \$100 a month, washerwoman earned \$100 a week, cooks \$150 a month, two onions cost \$1. Another Newarker wrote, "I shall leave the mines by the first of December and, let me tell you, I have had work and starvation enough to last me without putting myself in the way of it again. If I get back to Newark, I will stay there. Any one who comes to California will not want to go again."

The route selected by Seth Boyden's company was the one involving a crossing of the Isthmus of Panama at Chagres. The middle of April found them impatiently waiting at Panama City for a ship for San Francisco after a hazardous and costly trip by river boat, canoe and mule back. A fellow Newarker wrote, "If people cannot be persuaded to stay at home, they had better go round the Horn. This is the hardest expedition I ever took!" Doctor Lowrey, another Newarker, so despaired of getting a ship for the gold country, he at last decided to stay and practice medicine in Panama.

NOT until June 26 did the Advertiser carry the news that Seth Boyden's company

had arrived in San Francisco about the middle of May, and was about to leave for the mines. A few letters from the inventor himself appeared in later issues, and in December these words, "In my former letter I said, 'The gold is here, and if I have my health, I can get it.' I now see my mistake. The gold WAS here and there are now 100,000 people in pursuit of it. Still more are coming daily. Every river and stream has been traversed 1,000 times and their banks torn up again and again." Within two years, he had returned to Newark, as poor as he went, to work for his daily bread for 20 years more. Many another Newarker "lost his shirt," but Edward and George Steckles, however, sent home \$3,000 in gold dust, sewed up in deer-skin, part of their earnings of \$12,000, the fruits of their 16 months at the gold diggings.

It would be interesting to know what became of the other Newarkers who went to California, who of them "struck it rich," or returned ill and impoverished. Many stayed long enough to have a part in the exciting days that led to California's statehood, and to see the great transcontinental railroads built. There may be in the attics of Newarkers today family letters relating to the personal experience of the argonauts of 1849. They would make a fascinating story.



Hardships of travel and hunting for gold proved too much for many an adventurer. One, writing home, said: "If I get back to Newark, I will stay there."

NEWARK SUNDAY NEWS

## Vacation is no time to hesitate

When those hot, sticky days arrive, switch to comfortable Tampax for monthly protection



Perhaps you have already discovered Tampax, but if you haven't, there's no time like vacation time for changing your habits during "those days" of the month. Throw away those binding belts

and those hot, external pads which encourage perspiration! In their place use tiny Tampax—only 1 1/2" as bulky, worn internally, unseen, unfelt, efficient and comfortable. Doctor-invented, wonderfully absorbent, Tampax is inserted with patented applicator. No chafing, no odor. Quick changing and easy disposal—both great advantages, especially away from home. Be sure you use Tampax internally. Tampax simply cannot cause a bulge or edge-line under a dress or skirt or swim suit, no matter how snug-fitting. Sold at drug and notion counters in a substantial box: Regular, Super, Junior. Tampax Incorporated, Palmer, Mass.

### EXPERT CLEANING CAN—



double the life of your rugs

Have your rugs cleaned NOW by masters in the art of rug cleaning.

## JANCOVIUS and SON, Inc.

112-120 ARLINGTON STREET NEWARK, N. J.

Call MI 2-1336 or 4-1678

FOR THE BEST IN PAINT, LADDERS, SANITAS, WALLPAPER

G. L. KIMMERLE, PAINTER & LUMBER



## KIMMERLE & BRO.

281 SPRINGFIELD AVE. NEWARK, N. J.  
615 BLOOMFIELD AVE. MONTCLAIR  
1252 SPRINGFIELD AVE. IRVINGTON

## PHOTOSTATS

PHOTO REPRODUCTIONS OF VALUABLE PAPERS

Prompt Confidential Service Also Drafting Supplies

## SHAW BLUEPRINT CO.

12 EAST PARK ST., NEWARK  
Opposite Public Service Terminal  
PHONE MA 2-3228

JULY 17, 1949